



The MAGIC PEARL.

NEVER were there two little children who had such wonderful adventures as Heldfast and Searchfar. Heldfast was a boy and Searchfar a girl, and they had both wandered away from their happy homes. How they first were lost, nobody knows. A crowd of fierce-looking porcupines were frolicking in the forest, when they came upon the boy who stood with his back against a huge tree, looking fearlessly at them.

"What is your name, little boy?" questioned the King of the porcupines.

"Heldfast," replied he, as bravely as possible.

All the porcupines laughed a great deal at such a name.

"You shall certainly be held fast enough," declared they, and so they shot the long sharp-pointed quills like arrows from out of their backs all around the edges of his clothes, so that he could not possibly move from the tree. Of course, his hands were also bound down tight as well.

The porcupines brought him food and water every day, or else he would have starved to death. They kept him in this fashion for a long time. Then little Searchfar found him. She came walking through the woods one day, crying as though her heart would break, for she was also lost, and did not know what was going to become of her. When she saw Heldfast she was very glad. Then she began to cry again when she beheld the cruel way in which he was fastened to the tree.

"Don't cry, Searchfar," Heldfast said, after she had told him her name, and how she wanted very much to be taken back to her mamma and papa. "Eat some of the food which the porcupines have set out for me; then you shall help me to escape."

"But I cannot pull the quills out from around you," declared Searchfar; "they hurt my fingers dreadfully, too." And she held up her poor bruised fingers to his eyes.

"I'll tell you what to do," cried Heldfast, "if you are only strong enough. The King of the porcupines told me that there were only two ways in which the quills could ever be pulled out. One way was to get a big pearl from the bottom of the ocean, at the sight of which the quills would all fly out of themselves. The other way was to touch each quill with a clam shell, a different shell for each quill. Of course, you cannot very well get a big pearl from the bottom of the ocean, but if you are not too tired, you might go to the seashore and bring back some clam shells."

"Oh, goody, goody," cried little Searchfar, jumping up and down, and dancing about with pleasure. "Of course I will. Only tell me which way I must go to get to the seashore."

"It will be a long walk for you," said Heldfast, ruefully, "and you must be careful not to let any of the porcupines see you, or they might fasten you to a tree, just as they have done with me, and then we should both be in a pretty pickle, wouldn't we?"

"I'm not afraid," declared Searchfar, sturdily; "only tell me in which direction I must go in order to reach the seashore."

"Straight along over hill and across valley," said Heldfast, pointing with his eyes, "and you will come to the seashore. But be very careful!"

Before he could finish little Searchfar was off like the wind, running as fast as her little legs could carry her.

"Hold on, hold on," shouted Heldfast. "I want to tell you to beware of the big whale!" But little Searchfar was out of hearing, and all the boy could say was: "Well, I hope the big, cunning whale won't entrap her. May be he won't see her."

Little Searchfar ran on and over the hills and across the valleys until she came to the lovely sandy beach of the ocean, and there, sure enough, she found great heaps of white clam shells. So she gathered up the corners of her little white apron and commenced picking them up as fast as she could,

for she knew it would take nearly as many as she could possibly carry to touch each quill with a separate shell.

But the great whale that Heldfast was just going to warn her about when she ran away from him came swimming toward land just about that time. He quickly noticed her golden curls and pretty pink frock, and he determined to catch her and give her to his little baby whale to play with. So he dived down in the water until he came across a perfectly beautiful big white clam shell, and fastened it to his line with a loose slip knot in the end. Then he watched his chance, and when she was not looking in his direction he threw the shell at her feet. Searchfar was so delighted at the sight of this lovely shell that she at once stooped forward to pick it up, but no sooner had she grasped hold of it than the cunning old whale drew the slip knot tight around her wrist, and so made her a prisoner. She was very much frightened at first, but the old whale comforted her and told her that she should not be hurt the least mite, and that he was only going to take her with him to be a play-fellow for his little baby. So he told her to sit upon his back and hold very tight, while he swam swiftly with her toward his home.

Searchfar was very sorry indeed at the thought of poor Heldfast still a prisoner against the tree, but the baby whale was so playful that she quickly dried her eyes and commenced to make friends with him. Besides she had a new idea in her little head. She noticed that the old whale was very fond of his baby, and would do almost anything she asked him. So as soon as she got a chance she persuaded the baby whale to cry for a big pearl from the bottom of the ocean to play with. No sooner did the big whale hear this than he swam off and returned in a little while with a huge pearl that shone like a star in the sunlight. He gave it to the baby whale, and as soon as the latter tired of it Searchfar picked it up and hid it in her pocket.

It took her some little while to think of a plan to make the big whale go far enough away so she would have a chance to escape, but finally she thought of one.

She persuaded the baby whale to cry for some of the brilliant crimson of the setting sun, and the big old whale immediately started toward it.

"Now is my chance," said little Searchfar, and kissing the baby whale a tender good-by she set out in the direction in which poor Heldfast was a captive. It was a long journey, but she arrived there at last, and the very instant she held the huge pearl in front of the porcupine quills they flew out and Heldfast was free.

And so they started away, hand in hand, and undoubtedly found their way home again, for several years afterward there was a wedding, and the bride wore a huge pearl at her throat, and her husband always declared that she had rescued him from imprisonment with a magic pearl.



The Whale Carried the Little Girl Away on His Back.

The Doll's Fair.

ELOISE'S little sister was going to furnish a flower and candy table at a doll's fair, and she didn't know how to go about it. So Eloise fixed it up for her in this fashion:

She made the flow-table out of three empty paper boxes

about fourteen inches long, four inches deep and six inches wide. They were so sewed together with a darning needle and thin twine as to form three sides of a square. They were to stand upside down, so that the bottoms would form the top of the tiny table.

Next Eloise got six little Japanese paper parasols, such as can be bought almost anywhere for a cent, and after making holes in the proper places in the top of the table stuck the slender stems in them, thus forming pretty ornaments. After that she made up a lot of little paper nosegays and strewed the table top with them. When the doll was placed behind the whole, with two umbrellas on either side and two in front, the general effect was so good that the little sister laughed with delight.

When the fair was held small candles were displayed on the table in little dishes taken from the doll's set. Of all the display at the doll's fair, that made by Eloise's little sister was pronounced the most effective.

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